PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) The number of telephone connections to be released in Kerala during the next financial year has not been finalised yet.

Retaining of Arms by ULFA

1238. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of members of United Liberation Front of Assam have been permitted to retain arms after their surrender;

(b) if so, the names of such members with reasons in each case;

(c) whether large number of members of ULFA have been found involved in several crimes after their surrender;

(d) if so, the names of such members with nature of crimes committed by them;

(e) whether some of surrendered members have been provided with personal security; and

(f) if so, their names with reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR): (a) to (f) An identical Question was raised by the Hon'ble Members of the Parliament in Rajya Sabha which was admitted as Unstarred Question No. 669 for 6.3.1996, to which an Assurance was given on the floor of the House. The said Assurance was fulfilled vide this Ministry's O.M. No. 13013/696-NE.IV dated the 11-9-1996. Kind attention of the Hon'ble Member is invited to the information furnished therein.

Additional export-quota for cotton yarn

1239. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have cleared an additional export quote of 15 millions Kgs. for cotton yarn during 1996 as the ceiling of 80 million kg. has been fully exhausted;

(b) if so, the total exports till date of cotton yarn during the current year as compared to the last year corresponding period indicating figures alongwith valuc in terms of rupees; and

(c) whether the industry has demended an enhanced ceiling for 1997 in view of the buoyant trend in the country's exports; if so, the decision taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government have enahnced the ceiling for export of cotton yarn of 40s and below counts for 1996 by 15 million kgs. i.e., from 80 million kgs to 95 million kgs.

(b) The exports of cotton yarn have amounted to 323.91 million kgs valued at Rs. 3859 crores during the period January—October, 1996 as compared to 192.94 million kgs valued at Rs. 2475 crores exported during the corresponding period of 1995.

(c) The Government fixes the quantitative ceiling for export of cotton yarn on a year to year basis. As in the past, the Cotton Yarn Export Policy for 1997 would be announced after careful consideration of all relevant factors, such as production and domestic demand in respect of raw cotton, production and prices of cotton yarn, requirement of yarn for the decentralised handloom sector etc.

Villages without post office/PCO' in Madhya Pradesh

1240. SHRI SURESH PACHORI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages which have post offices and PCOs till date;

(b) the number of villages in Madhya Pradesh are without post offices and PCOs as on date;

(c) whether Government have any time

bound programme for providing post offices and PCOs in those villages;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) to what extent the Panchayat Sanchar Seva Scheme has so far performed?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The number of villages in the country which have post offices till date is 134282. 226913. villages have PCOs.

(b) The number of villages without post offices in Madhya Pradesh is 61439. 48208 villages in Madhya Pradesh do not have PCOs.

(c) and (d) Post Offices are opened progressively under Annual Plan Schemes subject to fulfilment of Departmental norms and availability of resources. The policy of the Department is to open Post Offices in rural areas preferably in Gram Panchayat villages justifying Post Offices. As for PCOs, all remaining villages are proposed to be provided with PCOs, facility in the 9th Five Year Plan period.

(e) At present 497 Panchayat Sanchar Seva Kendras are functioning in the country.

Training to Employees for Digital Communications System

1241. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have selected NIIT and Uptron to train about one lakh middle level employees to handle digital communications system; and

(b) if so, the details of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The Department of Telecom has awarded Work Orders to M/s NIIT Ltd. and M/s Uptron India Ltd. on 6.5.96 to provide 2 weeks training in computers to 42,700 officials eligible for appointment as Senior Telecom Operating Assistants in 4 streams viz. General, Phones, Telegraph General and Telegraphy.

(b) No agreeement has been signed between the Department and the training institutions. However, work orders have been given to them to implement the aforesaid training programme and the salient features of the work order are as follows:—

(i) M/s NIIT Ltd. have been given Work Orders to impart training to 21,300 officials of the following Telecom Circles:—
Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Madras Telephone District, MTNL Delhi, North East, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

(ii) The Work Order placed on M/s Uptron India Ltd. provides for training to 21,400 officials of the following Telecom Circles:—
Andhra Pradesh, Calcutta Telephone District, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, MTNL Mumbai, U.P. (East) and U.P. (West).

(iii) The training shall be of 2 weeks duration and the training fee @ Rs. 2,400/- per trainee is payable to these institutes.

Abolition of Reservation for Non-Quota Exporters in Handloom Sector

1242. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have abolished reservation available for the handloom sector within the Non-quota Exporters entitlement;

(b) if so, the details regarding the new policy laid down for distribution levels yarn, fabrics mill-made and powerloom madeups as also handlooms separately;

(c) whether it is a fact that this is the third time revision of the policy since